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healthy family life, they may be trusted to conduct themselves reasonably in relation to so much of the outer world as they encounter in the school, or in the home companionship of their brothers' and sisters' friends. This free intercourse among young people is as yet very largely wanting in France, and its absence is to be held responsible for many of the most serious evils in the national life.

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CARLYLE'S ETHICS.

We are wont to think of Carlyle more often as a moral teacher than as a historian or a writer on literary subjects. As historian or essayist alone, he might perhaps be superseded or fall into neglect; as a moral philosopher, it is scarcely conceivable that he should not permanently occupy a high place in English literature and have a wide influence upon readers. Yet a close examination of his moral doctrines reveals striking deficiencies as well as peculiarities. He has enunciated his ideas with tremendous vigor, a clearness that never leaves uncertain the meaning of any sentence or paragraph, and with wearisome iteration; yet he has nowhere reduced them to any system, nor sought to establish them on a secure metaphysical basis; and at times even their practical application remains in doubt. He was impatient of any attempt to "justify the ways of God to men." His moral convictions were ingrained, and suffered no essential change—a characteristic rare among great thinkers—during the whole course of his literary activity. An expression of "Sartor Resartus" or of "Friedrich" is equally authentic as an expression of his permanent belief and doctrine. His attitude toward literature and literary art altered remarkably as the sense of the earnestness of life bore with increasing weight upon him; his hopefulness disappeared, his denunciation became more vigorous and unrestrained; but his perception of duty and its sanction was the same from first to last.

The analyst of character finds much in the influences of

Carlyle's life to explain his dominant qualities and beliefs. To his inheritance of the stern and sombre Scottish temperament, were added the struggles of his youth and earlier manhood with untoward circumstances, poverty, ill health, and doubt, to impress upon him the darker side of life. He was driven by outward as well as inward necessity to work, yet was capable of no performance without extreme effort; and *work*, by the unnatural stress which he must lay upon it for himself, became to his mind the chief object of existence. He suffered much and magnified his sufferings; and endurance appeared a virtue as well as a necessity. The power of enjoyment—the taste for art, music, society, and travel—were denied to him by nature as well as circumstance; and he conceived the pursuit of happiness to be among the most unworthy of human motives. In spite of his rejection of the externals and the dogmas of Christianity, he retained a profoundly religious sense, solemn and awful in its combination of the Scotch with the Hebrew spirit. Beyond the necessity for bread, he felt that there was an equally peremptory and inexorable spiritual necessity—a vocation not to be combined with the other except at the price of exhausting effort and suffering. With all his earnestness and force, he was long unheeded; and the neglect and misinterpretation which he and his works encountered may well have exaggerated his idea of the evil, injustice, and thoughtlessness of the world.

The seriousness of life is to Carlyle a part of the fixed order of the universe; but its immediate causes lie less in that misery which the philanthropist tries to alleviate than in the human error which the theologian condemns. In many points Carlyle resembles the theologians of the older school, from whom, indeed, he had directly inherited.¹ Evil is in the world by human agency, by human choice wrongly exercised. Pain, poverty, want, are by no means to be regarded as always and necessarily evils; they may be only the indispensable discipline to prepare us for our work. No Epicurean gods or blind fates preside over the world; much that seems evil is sent by the

¹ See Froude's "Life of Carlyle," Vol. II, ch. 1, ch. 26, pp. 220 ff.

Powers of Heaven in wise beneficence. But real evil exists also in vast amount, inexcusable and pernicious, subserving no useful purpose, and with which any patience is out of place. The great sources of evil are Sin, Sham, and Stupidity. But the great mass of mankind is stupid and blind; there is only now and then one who sees things clearly in their true relations, who knows and is obedient to the laws of God and of Nature.

Yet however tolerant or insensible men may be of the evil which ought to be swept away, the Eternal Powers will, when it has reached the wholly intolerable point, interfere and sweep it away more or less completely themselves. The overthrow of Charles I, the annihilation of Poland, and—most conspicuous example of all—the French Revolution, were such violent manifestations of the wrath of Heaven, working through human agency against profane and sinful shams which had become intolerable in its sight. A nation may be spared beyond its desert, as England has been in the last two centuries, because, in spite of foolishness and hypocrisy, it has not yet filled the cup to overflowing—or, perhaps, only by the unmerited mercy of Heaven. So long as Heaven's mercy continues there is a gleam of hope and a possibility of remedy. Carlyle is pessimistic, but not wholly so:

"O Heaven, and are these things forever impossible, then? Not a whit. To-morrow morning they might all begin to be, and go on through blessed centuries realizing themselves, if it were not that—alas, if it were not that we are most of us insincere persons, sham talking-machines and hollow windy fools! Which it is *not* 'impossible' that we should cease to be, I hope!"²

A sincere and humble recognition of the Laws of God and Nature, an obedience to them and a willingness to speak and act the truth, will work much or all. Yet in general he hardly cares to turn his eyes in the direction of the future. In its uncertainty it is as nothing to him. Intent upon that truth which has no limitations of time, he studies its manifestations only in the past and the present. We have learned to look at the future with infinite hopefulness because we think we per-

² "Latter-Day Pamphlets," No. 4.

ceive a law by which unlimited progress and improvement are promised. For Carlyle no such law existed. The present seemed to him in many ways a deterioration from the past; the future was little hopeful, and the prediction of it a work of the imagination, often false at best, and wholly unprofitable.

In the doctrines of the sinfulness and moral blindness of man, the certainty of penalty, though deferred, the mercy which endures as long as endurance is possible, the sole hope of salvation in recognition of Divine Law and obedience to it, we find but a repetition of the fundamental principles of Christian theology, though with little stress on the Love which is so important a part of the Christian religion. But Carlyle had rejected the supernatural origin of Christianity, and it therefore became incumbent on him, when he spoke of Divine Law, to explain what that law is. This he has failed to do clearly. He often uses the expression "Laws of Nature" in a similar way; but one would be sadly wide of the mark in seeking Carlyle's meaning in any scientific treatise. We might interpret the phrases in the light of two other familiar antithetical expressions of Carlyle's—*reality*, not *appearance*; *right*, not *wrong*. But if we ask, "*What is* appearance, and *what reality*; *what right* and *what wrong*?" we must answer in Carlylean phrase, "*Right is conformity to the Laws of God and of Nature.*" A vicious enough circle!

The question as to the actual application of the terms *right* and *wrong* is, at our stage of moral enlightenment, by no means an idle or superfluous one. Every man has his own ethical standards, differing more or less widely from those of other men. Few of them are likely to be correct; perhaps none of them are wholly so. Morality may yet make as important advances as the physical sciences promise. It is hardly conceivable that the boundary line between *right* and *wrong* can ever be accurately determined at every point: at present it is still vague—more vague perhaps in the political matters with which Carlyle so largely dealt than in personal ethics. But the function which he assumed was by no means that of revealing new moral truth, but of emphasising the old, which to his mind had fallen into neglect. The condition of things which he would

fain see restored is always one that he can parallel from a past age.

Nevertheless Carlyle has presented old truths in a new light, or at least with originality of expression. His cardinal virtues, as we may call those upon which he has most insisted, are by no means the traditional ones. The first and greatest of them is, of course, *sincerity, truthfulness, honesty*, the opposite of sham and falsehood. The keynote of his teaching is struck in his ever-recurring exaltation of this virtue, and denunciation of its opposite.

Carlyle found, or believed he found, in his own time more sham, hypocrisy, and falsehood than had existed in any age before, unless it were the eighteenth century, which by its swollen excess of untruth fairly exploded at the end. We need not decide whether he was right. All thoughtful men recognise the dishonesty which is prevalent in certain spheres of life, especially in business and in politics, and the decline of that universal faith, earnestness, and candor, which Carlyle found at its best in the Middle Ages. But "Carlyle never understood or tried to understand his time," says Edmond Scherer.³ It was difficult for him to see how people could believe otherwise than as he believed; he was intolerant and avowedly defended intolerance; and so he found sham in religious professions, because people sat while they pretended to kneel, or because, while professing belief, they would question and speculate.

Carlyle's second cardinal virtue may be considered to be *patience*. Man is born into a world which is by no means wholly to his liking, in which for the most favored there is much to bear and suffer, much to do that the natural man would far rather not do. For the less fortunate this is in a vast degree more true; for neither in the actual world nor in the scheme of things is any equality of lot or compensation found or designed. Some may have little but unrelieved suffering in their lives, because thereby better work can be had from them, others because they are fit for nothing else, others—be-

³ "Essays on English Literature," translated by George Saintsbury, p. 230 (from "Etudes sur la Littérature Contemporaine," Vol. VII).

cause Heaven wills it so. Instead of demanding happiness as his merit, man had better assume that he has deserved nothing but eternal misery, and then see whether the order of nature will not appear a little more cheerful. At any rate, "Man that is born of a woman is full of trouble"; and this trouble it behooves him to bear patiently and unrepiningly, without hope of reward, but solely because it is the will of Heaven. Only if the evil he encounters is the result of human folly, error, or sin, may he be impatient—like Carlyle himself. The only happiness he may hope for is the satisfaction of having found his work and done it faithfully with his best powers.

Closely akin to patience is the virtue of *obedience*. Obedience—first to the Laws of God and Nature, secondly to his King or ruler—the wise and good man will always strictly render. Having found his place in life and his work, he will perform his duty with humble submission. For the great mass of mankind, indeed, it would seem as if this were the first requisite, especially if there is one worthy to command. For there is little liberty in the world, except the liberty to do one's duty; the millions must obey unquestioningly the supreme and absolute command of their King, as he must obey the Laws of God and of Nature. Such a ruler is, as Carlyle knows well enough, not always to be found, nor even once in every century. But when he is found, let mankind make the most of him. Let them render him not only obedience, but such a reverence as they render to Heaven itself. Such a man is a hero, and the worship of heroes is one of the most instinctive, as well as one of the noblest inclinations of the human soul.

Finally, we may add to this list the virtue of *silence*. Carlyle is awearied of the talking of this great world—talking without meaning, talking before consideration, talking for talking's sake, and, worst of all, talking to *conceal* thought or to deceive. Let man keep silence until he has something to say worth saying, and then let him say it in the fewest, plainest words. Rather than talk in the highest circles, let him act and work in the lowest. For action, not speech, is what is needed.

To Carlyle the most ill-directed action is more hopeful than inaction, or than any speech which is not necessary. Work to

him is the prime object of life, and all his virtues are the virtues of a worker. It were well that a man's work should be wise and useful; but even the most sordid money-getting is preferable to idleness. The man who is seeking to act, to work, to do something, even though his efforts are wholly misdirected, may at last be turned in the right direction; while the idle man is almost without promise or possibility of good. Carlyle cannot conceive that inaction may at times be as truly a virtue as silence. He knows, indeed, that half the activities of the world are useless or worse; he knows that there is a fault somewhere in the industrial system which results in over-production and glut of the market at the same time that thousands are naked and starving. But useless activity he would have reformed by a corrected moral sense; the fault in the industrial system is for legislators, not for him, to discover.⁴

Carlyle assumes that there is work appointed for every man—some work for which he is fitted; that by diligence and willingness each can find his proper work, and can then be useful and, so far as is permitted, happy. The appointment of this work he refers to a divine predestination.⁵

Carlyle was no democrat, and, great as was his sympathy with the "masses" when they were suffering, he probably thought that it made little difference at what or where they were employed, so long as they labored usefully and escaped starvation.

These five, then—truthfulness, patience, obedience, reverence, silence—are Carlyle's cardinal virtues. Of the old Greek virtues, temperance, courage, and wisdom are quite in keeping with those newer qualities on which he most strongly insists. But regarding justice, which was to Plato the consummation of all virtue, there is in Carlyle a strange insensibility, or rather a

⁴ His teachings, it seems, did have direct influence upon British legislation. He helped to strike the *laissez-faire* doctrine its death-blow.

⁵ "In spite of science," says Mr. Froude, "he had a clear conviction that everything in this universe, to the smallest detail, was ordered with a conscious purpose. Nothing happened to any man which was not ordained to happen. No accident, no bullet on battlefield, or sickness at home, could kill a man till the work for which he was appointed was done."—"Life," II, ch. 29, p. 275.

pushing of it into the background as not of primary importance. "Justice? Yes, Friedrich had a sense of justice, too," is the substance of his perfunctory mention of that in his largest work, where, indeed, temperance and fortitude are better illustrated.

Justice, in its abstract form, is the assuring to everyone of his exact desert. To perfect justice it would make no difference whether the balance were on the debit or the credit side—whether the desert were reward or punishment. A complete system of rewards has been found impracticable in human government; and, except when it acts as arbiter in civil cases, the state has mostly confined itself to a crude system of penalties supposed to vary in severity according to the offense. To this half of justice Carlyle is keenly sensitive; he sees clearly that violation of law must and will sooner or later bring its penalty. And that is almost the total of justice to him, as it is to criminal jurisprudence.

But, though human government is incompetent to satisfy both halves of justice, Heaven and the individual man need not be so. The balance of credit may be paid as well as the balance of debit exacted. This is what religions have sought to assure, reserving payment—since perfect justice is hardly discoverable in this world—to a future life. But Carlyle's religion, neither Christian nor ethnic, had little room for reward. "My friends," he exclaims, "I think you are much mistaken about Paradise! 'No Paradise for anybody: he that cannot do without Paradise go his ways.' Suppose you tried that for a while! I reckon that the safer version."⁶ The poor human being must be content if he can escape punishment: neither in this world nor in the next dare he demand or expect perfect justice, unless indeed he assumes that he has deserved nothing or worse.

If any one virtue more than another may be called the flower of moral discovery, it is this same virtue of justice, which is the last to appear in the world. Little trace of it exists in nature. Temperance, patience, courage, silence, and the rest are, in a rude but effective way, enforced upon the beasts; but the natural world and the brute creation live and thrive upon

⁶ "Latter-Day Pamphlets," No. 2.

injustice. All physical evolution is a series of monstrous examples of it. What we call natural penalties are almost as likely to fall upon the innocent as upon the guilty. Only when man has reached a considerable stage of advancement is justice conceivable. It is the latest in order; and, as Plato held, the most consummate of all, the one which includes and binds together all the others. Perhaps its meaning has never as yet been fully understood: Carlyle, a man of primitive force, has but a rudimentary sense of it.

Carlyle's conception of the practical duties of man is tolerably evident from the kind of virtues he chiefly preached. But to the fundamental question of the sanction of morality, Carlyle, inspiring preacher as he is, has contributed nothing. The matter is perfectly clear to him, but, upon the basis of his philosophy, to him alone. He has pretty much thrown overboard the incitement of reward, so effective in religion, and with it all "Benthamee," utilitarian, and hedonistic theories of "greatest happiness." He has retained the threat of punishment for wrongdoing, and expressly asserted the existence of a Divine Power which judges, condemns, and inflicts the penalty; yet, by doubting the reality of a future life, he removed from this terror much of its certainty and thoroughness, and he surely did not conceive the dread of punishment to be the highest or in any way a satisfactory motive of human endeavor. At most, he has assumed, as a thing too positive for discussion, that right is that which is in harmony with the laws of God and of Nature.

The sanction of right must consist either in its inherent desirability, recognisable to the human mind, or else in the decisive, unquestionable, perhaps inexplicable *fiat* and command of God. In reality it seems to have both these sanctions; but let us consider each one separately. In the latter case—if right is that which has, for any reason whatever, been appointed as such by the Divine Will—it must, in order to be binding upon us, be revealed in a sufficiently distinct manner. Revelation may be of two sorts: the natural revelation which the mind with its own powers recognises and accepts in nature, physical law, and the known facts of the world; or special revelation through the

voice of God, incarnated divinity, or inspired men. The former can teach us much, even concerning the will of the Creator; it makes known the laws of nature, which are divine in their origin if anything is divine: and the dullest soon learns to respect the forces of gravity and hunger. Natural revelation may even teach us something of morality; but that it can give us a complete and perfect system of moral law, based upon the more or less arbitrary ordinances of divinity, and especially that the divine commands can be discovered in nature by any but utilitarian considerations, it is not easy to believe. This is the ground which Carlyle took.

For any complete system of morality based solely upon the Divine Will, special revelation seems imperatively called for.

On the other hand, if morality is placed upon a merely human basis, and right is to be commended and practiced only because it is desirable, the source of its desirability can hardly be found elsewhere than in the fact that it conduces to human happiness. From this purely human point of view, if any action brings neither happiness nor unhappiness to one's self or any other, it is hardly conceivable that such an action can be either right or wrong. If any particular action brings unhappiness, without any consequent and compensating happiness, near or remote, to any one, it is certainly evil. If any action causes only happiness to one's self and others it may safely be set down as good. And if these three supposed actions are, as they seem unquestionably to be, respectively indifferent, bad and good, all actions may, so far as we can foresee their results, be weighed and determined by the same standard. But this is the philosophy against which Carlyle cried out most vehemently—with inconsistency as well as with unreason. To his mind the pursuit of happiness was not only unworthy, but futile—a view which was doubtless quite as much the result of temperament as of thought. He is inconsistent in rejecting the pursuit of happiness, and yet preaching the terrible penalties of wrongdoing. Avoidance of penalty is nothing more or less than the pursuit of happiness; and there is no reason why one who does not seek happiness should strive to avoid the suffering of punishment. The pursuit of happiness

is indeed often futile; but that is no reason why we should not seek such as is obtainable. Is man to endeavor only where success is assured?

The abstraction called God which we can obtain from nature, apart from revelation, might not impress us as having the qualities of love and compassion, but, unless a future state of punishment is granted, should hardly inspire great awe or fear. By rejecting both revealed religion and the pursuit of happiness as ground and motive of morality, Carlyle has left his moral system without sufficient basis. One or the other, or both together, are necessary.

Carlyle was by no means sure of immortality, and was consequently unable to admit the consistency of happiness as an end with his conception of God. The complete development of the happiness-philosophy postulates a future life.

Carlyle's political doctrines are closely connected with the general principles of morality which have been outlined. In his view there can be no good government unless the nation is deserving of such. In Democracy he has no faith at all. The majority is always hopelessly wrong, and no amount of promiscuous voting will lead to any result of value, except a knowledge of what the people will endure and what they will not. But his faith in the results of hereditary kingship is, of course, equally small. It seems to be either a fortunate accident or a gift of the gods when a nation, as nations now are, does obtain a true king. Carlyle uses by preference the word King as a generic term, partly, perhaps, attracted by a false etymology, partly because of its suggestions of supreme and unquestioned authority. The elder Pitt was the last real king of England, though not a king in name at all; Frederick the Great was the last king in all Europe; and we may have to wait long for another. But certainly in the lower ranks of the people, if not in the higher, there must exist from time to time a very few men of royal nature and wisdom; and Carlyle is democratic enough to wish no obstruction to their rising, if it happens so, from the lowest to the highest place. His Ideal State, like Plato's, is one in which "the wise men are kings, and the kings wise men." Wise men are seldom to be

found; when they are to be found, let the wisest one or the wisest ten be king or rulers by a certain divine right, which men have only to recognise and respect.

But how to find and know the wise man, the born king? Somebody or some number of people must find him and invest him with power, if he is to be king. But the voters, whether many or few, are apt to be blind in such a matter. "Why not cast dice for them?" he asks once, but offers no serious proposal for the solution of the question. The reform of politics must be begun at home. However large or small the electing or voting body may be, the rulers will be wise and true kings when that body is itself wise and true. Only to a wise, earnest, sincere, and reverent people can a true and good king be given. Such was the dominant party in England, though never a majority, in the time of Cromwell; and Cromwell was given to England. The primary thing to be sought is not, after all, any trifling variation in methods of government or of election, but rather the increase of wisdom and the development of character in the individuals of a nation.

When once the true king has been found, almost the only civic virtue for the mass of the nation is obedience. The king in his wisdom is to command and be obeyed, not to suggest and be overruled by an ignorant, clamorous, greedy mob. The people must recognise, or be made to recognise, that they are born to be governed, with an iron hand if necessary, and that their only function is cheerfully, obediently, and unquestioningly, or else by inexorable constraint, to perform the tasks set them. It is for their own good, and in accordance with eternal law.

Carlyle has been dead but little over twenty years, but his voice comes to us like a voice out of the past. The catch-words of modern philosophic writing—optimism and pessimism, altruism, evolution, and the like, are absent from his works. He paid little heed to the passing phases of thought: his eyes were fixed upon eternal truth, as he could perceive it, regarding with impatience all distorted reflections of that truth. The reflection of it in his own mind may to others appear distorted; we may find his Why insufficient, and differ from him

as to the How. Yet a teaching which enforces man's serious duties, even with an excessive degree of gloomy earnestness, must always have its place and value. His office is not that of the metaphysician, but that of the preacher, who, dispensing with analysis and taking much for granted, warns and incites, stimulates and denounces. The duty of ascertaining what is the right to which he exhorts, he leaves, if somewhat doubtfully, to our own perceptions and consciences.

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PLEASURE, IDEALISM, AND TRUTH IN ART.

Answers to the query, What is the relation of art to truth? must continue to vary with men's philosophies; because on our philosophy, express or tacit, must depend our conception of what truth finally is, and of its attainableness, and also of the sufficiency of art and the art-faculties as ways of arriving at it. The answers, too, of course, will differ with the degree in which they themselves have been thought through to their consequences. The following paper, therefore, will frankly move on highly general and abstract ground, though the motive which originally prompted the working out of the ideas embodied in it was not so much any direct eagerness to press to their application some points of preconceived remote theory, as a desire of working back to a more solidly thought-out basis for the evaluation of some very close-lying and concrete art-manifestations. Years ago the writer had felt the need of describing such poetry as that of Lord Byron, if this latter was to be acknowledged as being true art at all, in different terms from those prevalent even in professional philosophical æsthetics. This need was not made any less when one confronted such phenomena as Ibsen, Zola, Hardy, and the rest of our modern deniers, doubters, and positivists in the field of art. The present paper may be taken as primarily an endeavor at a solution of precisely the difficulties thus encountered. Furthermore, as undertaking the